



20 December 2004



Martin Luther King, Jr., Day Holiday Weekend Safety

1. On 17 January 2005 our country will celebrate its commitment to civil rights by honoring a great clergyman, civil rights leader, and Nobel Peace Prize recipient: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The United States Army is a leader in promoting equality and the ideals fostered by Dr. King.
2. I have designated 14 January 2005 as a USAREUR training holiday to give Soldiers here in garrison a 4-day weekend. I encourage each of you to use the holiday weekend to enjoy some well-deserved rest and relaxation, spend time with your families, and replenish your spirit. I also ask that you remain vigilant in your efforts to ensure your safety and the safety of your loved ones. Do not take any unnecessary risks, and do not allow your fellow Soldiers and civilians to do so.
3. Those who will be traveling over the holiday weekend should be aware that driving in Europe at this time of year can be dangerous. Over the last 10 years, 29 USAREUR Soldiers have died in vehicle crashes during the winter months. Snow, black ice (especially on bridges and in shaded areas), limited visibility, and extended hours of darkness are just some of the hazards that drivers may encounter.
4. If you plan to travel, do not overextend yourself. Driving too fast for conditions is a factor in many crashes; plan carefully and give yourself enough time to reach your destination. Instead of driving, consider traveling by train or using another type of public transportation. Most importantly, discuss your plans with your first-line leaders *Under the Oak Tree*, ask for their advice and assistance, and take steps to mitigate any risks. So far this fiscal year, we have lost two Soldiers, one civilian employee, and two family members in vehicle crashes. All indications are that these crashes could have been avoided if the individuals involved had assessed the risks and made better decisions—mostly to slow down!
5. Leaders: I need your help to ensure our great Soldiers and civilians are prepared for the upcoming holiday weekend. All of you should be following the principles of the Cody Model. This Model is explained in the Army Safety Campaign at <https://besafe.army.mil/pages/campaign.html> and the USAREUR 2004-2005 Winter Safety Campaign at http://www.per.hqusareur.army.mil/services/safetydivision/usareur_winter_safety_campaign.htm.

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6. The tools we use in USAREUR to help junior leaders include Bell Sends messages, the Driver's Risk Awareness Questionnaire, the Off-Duty Risk Assessment (described in [Army in Europe Command Policy Letter 3](#)), and the *Under the Oak Tree* process. Combine these tools with mentoring by using a "three-deep leadership" method (contact-level leadership backed up with two levels of active leader involvement and associated guidance, mentoring, and assistance). Use these tools to demonstrate your commitment to the safety of your personnel.

7. Our goal for the upcoming long weekend is *No Loss of Life*. Do not let anyone die on your watch. Have a great holiday, but do not lose sight of safety. Take care of yourselves and those in your charge so that everyone gets back safely. Doing this exemplifies what I mean by executing with excellence, Any Mission, Anywhere.



B. B. BELL
General, USA
Commanding

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ANY MISSION, ANYWHERE!